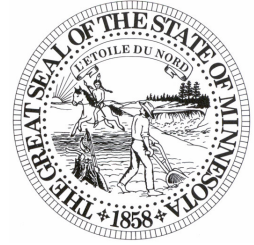




**STATE OF MINNESOTA
Minnesota Department of Commerce**



**NOTICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT
AVAILABILITY**

Issued: October 31, 2007

**In the Matter of the Xcel Energy
Application for a Certificate of Need
for the Grand Meadow Wind Farm
Large Wind Energy Conversion System
PUC Docket No. E002/CN-07-873**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Environmental Report (ER) for the Grand Meadow Wind Farm (Project) Large Wind Energy Conversion System (LWECS) proposed for Mower County, Minnesota has been completed and is available for review by the public. The ER addresses potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed LWECS project and alternatives. Copies of the ER and other relevant documents are accessible at:

<http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=19234>

Paper copies may be requested from the Minnesota Department of Commerce staff listed at the end of this notice.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project as proposed is an LWECS of approximately 100.5 MW that would consist of up to 67 wind turbines. The turbines would be General Electric 1.5 MW SLE units mounted on freestanding tubular steel towers supported by cast-in-place concrete foundations. The towers would be 80 meters (262.5 feet) in height. The rotor diameter would be 77 meters (252.6 feet), resulting in a maximum overall height of 118.5 meters (388.8 feet) when one blade is in the vertical position. Pad mount transformers at each tower would step up the voltage from 575 V to 34.5 kV. Electricity generated from the turbines would be brought to the project substation using a series of buried electrical cables. The project substation would then step up the voltage from 34.5 kV to 161 kV in order to transmit the electricity approximately five miles to the point of interconnection at the GRE Pleasant Valley Substation.

Proposed Site Location

The proposed project site is located in Mower County, approximately 20 miles east of the city of Austin. The cities of Grand Meadow and Dexter are located adjacent to the project site, and the city of Elkton is located within the project site. The total project site area including the wind plant and land easements covers approximately 40 square miles southeast of US HWY 90. The turbines and access roads will permanently displace approximately 68 acres.

Associated Actions

The Grand Meadow Wind Farm is part of a larger Wapsipinicon Wind Project site application. The entire project comprises up to 137 GE 1.5 MW turbines with a nameplate capacity of 205.5 MW. The remainder of the project site covers approximately 40 square miles northwest of US HWY 90. At this time there has not been an application for a Certificate of Need for the remainder of the project; it has not been determined that an application will be necessary.

PUC CERTIFICATE OF NEED REVIEW PROCESS

The Project is a “large energy facility” as defined in Minnesota Statute 216B.2421, subp. 2 and a Certificate of Need from the Public Utilities Commission is required for such a project under Minnesota Statute 216B.243. On June 25, 2007, Xcel Energy filed a Certificate of Need application for the Grand Meadow Wind Farm. On August 7, 2007, the PUC issued an Order accepting the application as substantially complete as of July 24, 2007.

A public hearing will be held shortly. Under state law, the PUC proceeding is the only time at which the “no-build” alternative and the size, type, and timing of a new generating facility will be considered. These items will not be addressed in the PUC Site Permit process.

Project Contacts and Information

For more information about the process, the project or to place your name on the project mailing list, contact David Birkholz (651-296-2878 or david.birkholz@state.mn.us) Department of Commerce, 85 7th Place East, Suite 500, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55101-2198. Other contact information: Toll-Free Tel: 1-800-657-3794, Fax: 651-297-7891 or TTY: Minnesota Relay Service, 800-627-3529, and ask for the DOC.